

## Viewpoint

### Letters

Dear Editor:

Architectural salvage and the falsification of history, the subject of Carol Rosier's article (*CRM*, Vol. 17, No. 5), has been of concern to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings at least since 1880 when it was raised at our Annual General Meeting.

The Society is still uneasy about it, for the reasons given in the article, but also for some related ones that may not apply in other countries. In Britain, we fortunately now have such effective legal controls over the demolition or stripping of historic buildings that much salvage that now comes on to the market legally is relatively recent. Sadly, this is less true of 19th century church fittings.

More serious is the problem of theft. Growing public interest in salvage has meant that high prices can be paid for chimneypieces, paneling and other decorative items. This has attracted the thieves, and many fine historic interiors have suffered from their crude attentions. Indeed, in Edinburgh, I recently saw several empty Georgian houses with prominent signs warning thieves that all chimney-pieces had been removed to safe storage. Nor is it only architectural features: traditional slate roofs on barns disappear over night.

It is, of course, a cannibalistic trade, which draws on a steadily decreasing source of supply. In Britain, small scale manufacturers of traditional materials such as stone slates find it hard to keep going. We would much rather that owners of old houses bought newly-made traditional materials, ensuring their long-term continuity, or in the case of decorative items use the skills of today's craftsmen.

Philip Venning,  
The Society for the Protection of  
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London

Dear Editor:

Our congratulations on the interesting and informative thematic issue of *CRM* entitled "Archeology and the Federal Government" (Volume 17, No. 6, 1994).

We are concerned, however, about the article on page 33 on the National Park System Archeology Program which is an unrevised reprint of our article on the park archeological program contained in the *CRM Bulletin* of July 1988. During the six years that have elapsed since the origi-

nal article was published there have been important changes in the program. The 1994 published article contains out-of-date information.

The park system has grown from the 340 areas in 1988 to 366 areas today, about a 7% increase in park units. And the acreage of the system continues to grow through the addition and expansion of park areas, especially in the western United States. Also, there are eight research facilities instead of the four archeological centers listed in 1988, and approximately thirty parks have resident archeologists instead of ten, despite the fact that seven parks lost staff archeologists during the last year or so. This figure will continue to change since the number of park archeologists is expected to increase due to a professionalization initiative and a restructuring initiative designed to place more resource specialists in parks.

We also now have a functioning, albeit still developing, field-based applied ethnography program, which did not exist in 1988. Five of our regional offices have regional ethnographer positions (Alaska, North Atlantic, Pacific Northwest, Rocky Mountain and Southwest). The park-applied ethnography program addresses data development and effective partnerships with Native American and other communities with traditional associations to natural and cultural resources within units of the national park system. The goal is to promote informed protection and appropriate use of the cultural and natural ethnographic resources that associated groups value.

While the remainder of the article outlines the current park archeological program, we are concerned that some readers may cite the out-of-date information in discussing either it or the still developing park ethnography program. Accordingly, we hope that you will print this letter in the next issue of *CRM* to provide your readers with the current information on these two park system programs.

Again, we congratulate you and your many contributors on a very timely, useful, and informative thematic issue of *CRM*; and we appreciate the effort that went into its production.

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Chief, Anthropology Division

Craig W. Davis  
Senior Archeologist

## Preservation Resources

### Publications

*A practical Introduction to Videohistory: The Smithsonian Institution and Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Experiment*, edited by Terri A. Schorzman. This book provides an introduction for historians to the use of video in research. Other books available in the Public History Series include *History Outreach: Programs for Museums, Historical Organizations, and Academic History Departments*, edited by J.D. Britton & Diane F. Britton; and *Corporate Archives and History: Making the Past Work*, edited by Arnita A. Jones and Philip L. Cantelon. For ordering information, contact Krieger Publishing Co., P.O. Box 9542, Melbourne, FL 32902-9542; 407-724-9542.

*The Beat of the Drum* by Don McDowell. The people, personalities, and events of Drum Barracks' colorful 130-year history are told in a highly readable style and is an indispensable story for history buffs of the Civil War and Indian wars in the far west. For more information, contact Drum Barracks Civil War Museum, 1052 Banning Blvd., Wilmington, CA 90744; 310-548-7509.

*Vestiges of Mortality & Remembrance: A Bibliography on the Historical Archaeology of Cemeteries*, by Edward L. Bell. With increasing demands for archeological assistance to identify and preserve threatened historical cemeteries, this comprehensive reference work will prove useful. An introductory essay provides an overview of scholarly trends and prospects, demonstrates the interpretive potential of historical mortuary sites, and offers a means to integrate multidisciplinary inquiry within a broader view of the historical past. This book will benefit archeologists, cultural anthropologists, and others involved in cemetery preservation and in the debate on the repatriation of curated human remains and funerary material.

For more information, contact Scarecrow Press, P.O. Box 4167, Metuchen, NJ 08840; 1-800-537-7107.

*Care and Maintenance of Wood Shingles and Shake Roofs*, by S.S. Niemiec and T.D. Brown. Pamphlet includes section on safety precautions as well as chemical, preservative, and oil treatments. To order, contact Oregon State University Extension Service, Publications Orders, Agricultural Communications, Administrative Services A422, Corvallis, OR 97331-2119; 503-737-2513. Also avail-

(Resources—continued on page 38)